(d) The setting up of distributorships/dealerships is a continuous process. Consequent upon the dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM), OMCs are free to set up the LPG distributorships/ Retail Outlets as per their commercial considerations in all the States as per the guidelines to be adopted by them.

Gas agencies in Uttar Pradesh

235. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gas agencies as on date in Uttar Pradesh and their distribution, district-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to open more gas agencies in the State during 2003 and 2004;

(c) if so, whether the places for the purpose have been identified; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were operating 914 LPG distributorships in Uttar Pradesh as on 1.4.2003.

(b) to (d) Consequent upon the dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM), OMCs are free to set up the LPG distributorships as per their commercial considerations. This is an ongoing process and hence full and finite information for the years 2003 and 2004 may not be possible.

Identification of New CBM Blocks

236. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of eight blocks in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal where exploration and production of Coal Bed Methane has started;

(b) the quantum of gas produced from these blocks during 2002-03, the likely production during 2003-04 and how and where the same is proposed to be utilized;

(c) whether any new CBM blocks have been identified; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the likely annual production therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Government of India has signed contracts for 8 blocks for exploration and production of Coal Bed Methane (CBM). These blocks are located in Jharkhand (3 blocks namely Bokaro North Karanpura and Jharia), Madhya Pradesh (2 blocks namely Sohagpur East and Sohagpur West) and West Bengal (3 blocks namely Raniganj North, Raniganj South and Raniganj East).

(b) These blocks are under various stages of exploration/assessment and commercial production has not commenced in any of the blocks.

(c) and (d) Government of India has offered 9 CBM blocks under the second offer of CBM Policy (CBM-II). The bid closing date is 15.10.2003. The 9 blocks are located in Andhra Pradesh (1 block), Chhattisgarh (1 block)-partially in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat (1 block), Jharkhand (2 blocks), Madhya Pradesh (2 blocks), Maharashtra (1 block) and Rajasthan (2 blocks). These are exploration blocks and reserves/ production can be estimated only after exploration/pilot assessment etc.

Barauni oil refinery

†237. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated capacity of Barauni oil refinery situated in Bihar;

(b) whether supply of crude oil to the refinery is as per its installed capacity;

(c) if not, the loss suffered during each of the last three years as a result thereof;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.